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Airmen distribute supplies to Iraqi school

By Senior Airman Colleen Wronek

332nd AEW Public Affairs

Balad Airmen traveled into potentially hostile territory last week to distribute donated school supplies at a nearby village's elementary school.

"The children really needed the supplies. That's why we went out there," said Chaplain (Capt.) Duane McCrory, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. "We are making a difference in their lives and hopefully we're winning their hearts and minds too."

Last year, Air Force civil engineers built the school the Airmen visited.

"The Army and the Air Force have built some schools in the area as a way to reach out to the local community," Chaplain McCrory said. "The villagers are destitute so you can really tell the difference between the schools we built and the ones that have been there awhile. Since they don't have the money to build or renovate the old schools themselves, we really show them we care by doing something that will help their children."

Lt. Col. Andrew Tracey, 332nd AEW safety chief, went on the humanitarian mission. He said the village was small and looked poor. "The school was painted white with pink trim and it had an office and seven or eight classrooms," he said. "The



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wronek

Chaplain (Capt.) Duane McCrory, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, tells children to sit down as he hands out donated school supplies during a recent humanitarian mission to a nearby Iraqi elementary school. Airmen handed out pens, pencils, notebooks, paper, scissors, crayons, markers, erasers, stuffed animals, soccer balls, volleyballs, basketballs and jerseys.

school design was simple. The classroom had a chalkboard and desks. They also had a court-yard, but as far as I could tell, they had nothing in the court-yard."

Chaplain McCrory spent several weeks coordinating with Maj. Gregory Reese, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron commander, and Capt. Maria Roberts, 732nd Expeditionary Logistics

Readiness Squadron Det. 2632 commander, to set up the humanitarian mission.

"During the last rotation, an e-mail requesting school supplies was sent out," said Chaplain McCrory whose home station is Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. "People from home would send school supplies to help the children. In addition to the supplies received on the Air Force side, the Army COSCOM G5

Civil Affairs unit collected and helped provide supplies."

The Airmen attempted to hand out one packed bag of school supplies to each child. The bags contained pens, pencils, notebooks, paper, scissors, crayons, markers and erasers. They also handed out stuffed animals, soccer balls, volleyballs, basketballs and jerseys.

See SCHOOL page 4

Balad hosts first National Prayer Luncheon

By Senior Airman Colleen Wronek
332nd AEW Public Affairs

The chief of the Air Force Chaplain Service was the guest of honor at Balad's first National Prayer Luncheon Wednesday in the Town Hall.

Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Charles Baldwin spoke at the luncheon on not giving up the faith. His speech titled, "Don't ever sell your saddle. Don't give up the faith," had three points: Hop on, hang on and hope on.

"The message is a reminder that in the midst of the Global War on Terrorism, faith in God is always there to give us the strength we need to face any crisis," Chaplain Baldwin said. "Hop on means faith is a gift you receive from God. Hang on means faith is an exciting journey that you hang on to and cherish. Hope on means having faith and hope when times are uncertain."

Chaplain Baldwin said prayer luncheons are a great time when people can come together and acknowledge their dependence on God and celebrate the heritage of their particular religious faith.

"It's certainly a wonderful testimony in how we respect one another despite our differences," he said. "It's wonderful that we can come together to sing, pray and ask God for his protection and have a renewed faith in God because we are sharing this moment with people of different faiths and cultures."

The event is an interfaith endeavor with observances in Washington D.C., military installations and communities across the nation.

"It provides an opportunity for personnel to reaffirm the moral and spiritual values upon which our nation was founded," said Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Franke, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.

National prayer luncheons or breakfasts have been an American tradition for decades.

"Prayer breakfast groups were inaugurated in 1942 among members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. Since that war year, these groups have continued meeting to discuss individual spiritual needs, and diverse expressions of our nations' dependency upon God," Chaplain Franke said. "In 1953, the first Presidential Prayer Breakfast was established and each year the breakfast has drawn the President,



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wronek

Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Charles Baldwin speaks at Balad's first National Prayer Luncheon Wednesday. During the interfaith luncheon, Chaplain Baldwin spoke on not giving up the faith and how God is their no matter the situation.

Cabinet members, the Supreme Court, Congress, the Diplomatic Corps, selected servicemembers, and prominent leaders in business, labor, education, and science.

The gatherings' name was changed to 'The National Prayer Breakfast' in 1970 to emphasize the purpose of the event rather than the people involved, and in recent years many groups have chosen to observe National Prayer Luncheons.

Chaplain Baldwin promised Col. Blair

Hansen, 332nd AEW commander, that he would speak at the prayer luncheon. "When I was here in August, Col. Hansen asked me if the deputy chief chaplain would do the prayer luncheon," Chaplain Baldwin said. "I promised him that either I or the deputy chief chaplain would come. It's a great opportunity to see the folks on a different rotation here and I'm honored to meet the people who make the remarkable stories back at home come alive."

Bioenvironmental engineers

Eliminating base hazards to Balad men, women

By Staff Sgt. Lindsey Maurice

332nd AEW Public Affairs

Clean air, water and soil – without these key resources Balad Air Base could not function.

With that in mind the Airmen of the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron bioenvironmental engineering flight work around the clock making sure these resources are safe for the entire base populace.

"We identify and eliminate

environmental and occupational hazards so that Air Force members deployed here can spend time with their grandchildren 30 years from now," said 1st Lt. Kevin Tloczynski, 332nd EMEDS bioenvironmental engineering flight chief.

The flight, which includes the lieutenant, one staff sergeant and a senior airman all deployed from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, has conducted 25 drinking water samples, four air samples, three radiation swipe samples and two depleted uranium samples.

Air Force/Senior Airman Adam Bradford

Staff Sgt. Brian Lohr and Senior Airman Jennifer Heath of the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron bioenvironmental flight use a HAZCAT kit to identify a test sample. "

We identify and eliminate environmental and occupational hazards so that Air Force members deployed here can spend time with their grandchildren 30 years from now.

1st Lt. Kevin Tloczynski 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron bioenvironmental engineering flight

"The water surveillance is especially important here," said Staff Sgt. Brian Lohr, 332nd EMEDS bioenvironmental engineering flight NCO in charge. "We have to monitor the drinking water often to ensure its potable for Air Force personnel."

In addition to testing key resources, the flight also conducts shop visits to make sure Airmen working with hazardous materials are doing so safely.

"We identify, characterize and recommend ways to mitigate environmental and occupational hazards," said Lieutenant Tloczynski. "These hazards could be anything from heat stress and noise to radiation."

Since their arrival, Lieutenant Tloczynski's flight has inspected 25 shops. Some of the aspects they inspect include chemical exposure; thermal stress; ergonomics; blood borne pathogens; hazardous waste management; radiation; welding, cutting and brazing operations; personal protective equipment and respiratory equipment.

"We are here to protect the worker," said Sergeant Lohr.

Lieutenant Tloczynski added that in addition to their everyday jobs, the bioenvironmental engineering team must also be ready to respond to hazardous threats or incidents at a



Air Force/Senior Airman Adam Bradford
Staff Sgt. Brian Lohr of
the 332nd Expeditionary
Medical Support Squadron bioenvironmental flight
samples an unknown substance with the Haz kit.

moment's notice.

"We use our technical expertise to characterize radiological, chemical and biological hazards and make recommendations to the incident commander," said the lieutenant. "We are on call 24/7 just in case."

With their deployment half over, the team continues to remain focused on their tasks at hand.

"We're here to protect the health of the Airmen here and will continue to do so until we're gone," said the lieutenant.

SCHOOL Continued from page 1

"When I was in the classroom, it was interesting to watch the interaction between the teachers and the students. It was like organized chaos," said Colonel Tracey, whose home station is Offutt AFB, Neb. "The kids sat down and moved back, but they never really got quiet when the teacher directed them to. As soon as the teacher turned his attention to me or someone else, the kids were out of their seats and trying to get more stuff."

The children were overjoyed to see the Airmen visit the schools.

"I carried the first box of supplies into the school and it felt great. The kids were still in the classrooms, but the buzz of excitement radiating from the classrooms was infectious," Colonel Tracey said. "It didn't matter that I don't understand their language. The tones of their voices and the increased volume told me they were excited to see us and curious as to what we were taking into the school."

Colonel Tracey said the halls were empty at first, but children were crowding the classroom doors to see what was going on.

"As we carried more and more boxes and bags into the school the buzz of the kids grew louder. Finally the kids spilled into the hallway and villagers also came into the school. It became a bit of a madhouse," he said. "The teachers tried to keep some order and I saw them use

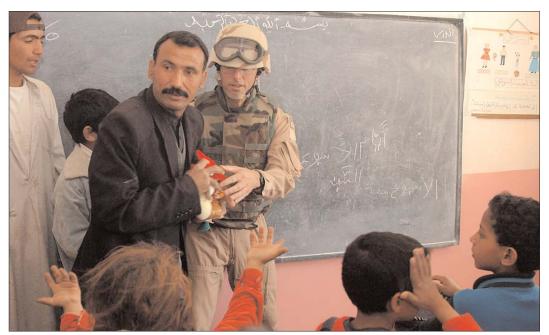


Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wronek

Lt. Col. Andrew Tracey, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing safety chief, hands stuffed animals to an Iraqi school teacher so he can help distribute them among the children.

their wooden sticks. After distributing a good amount of the supplies to the kids, the remainder was left in the headmaster's office for distribution at a later, more peaceful time."

Despite the children being everywhere, they were still respectful to the Airmen.

"There were kids everywhere and they were excited to see the visitors, especially the ones bringing in boxes," Colonel Tracey said. "They weren't shy, but curious and respectful of my 'space.' They weren't afraid to ask for anything. They didn't grab at me or grab for things until I made a move to hand them something."

Colonel Tracey said he only visited one classroom and the headmaster's office before being "ambushed" by children.

"I didn't have to go into

another classroom to see more kids because they swarmed into the hallway," he said. "I also saw a lot of kids outside the school who weren't attending class."

Colonel Tracey said the children seemed normal, like they could be from anywhere and they never seem to get enough.

"I'd hand something to the kids and before you knew it, they were back asking for more," he said. "I'd point to the item hanging out of their pocket and they'd back away, hide the item deeper in their pocket or at their desk and return asking for more."

Colonel Tracey said he would like to go off base again. "It was exciting, due to the element of danger and the fact I was out on an adventure doing something new," he said. "We were constantly scanning the area around us, looking for things that didn't seem right and at the same time I felt comfortable because our escorts were well-trained and focused on their responsibilities."

The security and transportation for this mission was provided by the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and the 732nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group. Colonel Tracey said he felt safe venturing into potentially hostile territory.

"They are a fine group of Airman who impressed me with their professionalism, knowledge and enthusiasm for their duties," he said. "I felt very comfortable going outside the wire under their care."

Balad Airmen win awards

The following is a list of Balad Airmen who won awards at the at the wing level or higher:

Senior Master Sgt. Robert Popp, 332nd Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron was named the Air Field Management Senior NCO of the year. His homestation is

Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.

■ Master Sgt. Phillip Brown, 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, was named the 437th Airlift Wing first sergeant of the year. His homestation is Charleston AFB, N.C.

Family deploys for Iraqi freedom

Father, daughter meet again after service kept them apart

By Senior Airman Colleen Wronek
332nd AEW Public Affairs

Due to conflicting Army and Air Force needs, a deployed father and daughter saw each other last month for the first time in a year and a half.

"Last time I saw her was Thanksgiving 2003. She was deployed then and had just gotten her two weeks of morale leave to come visit me," said Master Sgt. Robert Clark, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group emergency room shift leader. "I'm a New York Air National Guard member and she's active-duty Army stationed in Germany. When she returned from her first tour in Iraq, she went back to Germany to train for this tour."

Specialist Elena Clark, combat medic deployed to Mosul with the 94th Engineer Construction Battalion, was happy to see her father.

"We didn't have much time together. I only spent an hour with him and we talked and had lunch," she said. "We talk on the phone and e-mail, but it has been so long since we have talked face to face. I forgot how much I miss that."

Sergeant Clark arrived at his daughter's location by Sherpa. "Someone dropped by and said they had an opportunity for me," Sergeant Clark smiled. "I thought it was a medic helicopter trip, but it was actually a chance for me to see my daughter."

The two of them are very close, and even closer now that they are sharing similar experiences.

"I've got 30 years Navy and Marine Corps experience and my son, who is a Naval Academy graduate and now on board a carrier, and I are also close," Sergeant Clark said. "But since Elena and I are both enlisted medics in a combat zone, we're now closer to each other than ever before."



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. Robert Clark, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group, hugs his daughter, Army Specialist Elena Clark, 94th Engineer Construction Battalion. Sergeant Clark was able to see his daughter last month for the first time in more than a year.

Specialist Clark joined the Army out of high school because she was interested in traveling and Germany was a guaranteed location

"I asked her why she joined the Army and she told me it was the only uniform I haven't worn," Sergeant Clark said. "Although she's my only daughter, I always tell her she's my favorite one."

Specialist Clark said she was previously deployed in 2003 for a year, and she just started her second one year deployment in January. She is also concerned for her dad.

"Having him say that he is out here is dif-

ferent than actually seeing him here," she said. "I try not to think about how hostile this country is, but how he's in his element, and he loves this stuff. I do worry for him, but he has more experience than I do. He's still my dad, so how can you not worry?"

Sergeant Clark is also concerned for his daughter, but he knows she'll be fine. "I've got 39 years in the military so I know how the military takes care of its troops," he said. "I'm not concerned for her safety, but I'm really proud of her ability to cope and perform well. She's very strong, intelligent and independent."

Why are we in Iraq?

By Maj. Gregory Reese

332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron commander

If you follow the news, you realize many people in many nations continue to question why the United States invaded Iraq.

I am sure, like me, many family members or friends back home support you, but question why our nation is still involved in Iraq when the headlines show military men and women dying daily. I will also admit that prior to being deployed here I also privately wondered if the cost was worth it.

The day I arrived here the insurgents mortared us three times and an Army soldier and a KBR civilian were wounded, and I began to wonder even more about the cost to our nation.

As Americans, we tend to think in terms of ourselves and our nation. We grew up accustomed to freedom from fear and freedom to chose.

Unfortunately, the Iraqi people have not had this advantage. Under Saddam Hussein and for a large part of modern history, the people of Iraq have been used and oppressed by their rulers.

They did not have a government of and for the people. They often lived in fear of their government and realized if they tried This is about giving the next generation of Iraq a chance to choose their future, a chance for a young child to dream about going to college and actually being able to do it.

Maj. Gregory Reese 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron commander

to change things they would likely be imprisoned or killed. You can still readily see signs of this oppression in the people just outside the fence.

Why are we here? I realized why when I went on my first off-base patrol. I met a throng of children who reminded me of my own kids. These kids had a look of innocence and just wanted to play games.

Then, looking at some of their parents, I saw people old beyond their years. People who had the look of someone used to submitting to oppression. That is when I realized this is not about fighting the insurgents, this is not about Saddam Hussein, or

even about chemical weapons. For you and I this is about giving these children a chance to grow up in a free society.

This is about giving the next generation of Iraq a chance to choose their future, a chance for a young child to dream about going to college and actually being able to do it.

I realize such sentiments are hard to stomach when the Alarm Red siren goes off one more time and you hear explosions that could be coming for you, but remember that change always comes with difficulty.

Those who were in power – those who are threatened by freedom of choice – are fighting against us because democracy in Iraq threatens their hold on power.

Outside the fence there is not a huge throng of insurgents waiting to kill us, but a lot of people who have been threatened and intimidated by a minority who are holding on to power with violence.

Your service here helps to ensure that the power of the thugs grows smaller and the power of the people of Iraq grows larger

I certainly do not want to die in Iraq, but I also believe giving the young generation of Iraqis a chance to be free is worth some personal risk.

Free stuff for deployed servicemembers

The following is a list of sites featuring free stuff for deployed servicemembers and their families.

- Computers for spouses or parents of a deployed E-1-E-5 www.operationhomelink.org/
- Gifts and mail sent to children www.prweb.com/releases/2004/2/prweb106818.htm
- Phonecards www.operationuplink.org/
- To have a commander sign up for mugs for unit Airmen —

www.appreciateourtroops.org/forourtroops.shtml

- Shoebox carepackages www.operationshoebox.com/
- Cookies www.treatthetroops.org/
- Low airfare bluestarmoms. org/airfare.html
- Care packages bluestarmoms.org/care.html or www.militarymoms.net/sot.html or operationmili-

tarypride.org/smsignup.html or www.treatsfortroops.com/registration/index.php

- Air conditioners and heaters 66.241.249.83/
- Free air travel for emergency leave and for family members of injured servicemembers to travel to a medical facility www.heromiles.org/
- Books, DVD's and CD's www.booksforsoldiers.com/forum/index.php
- Daily prayer and scriptures www.prayercentral.net/engage/militaryprayer/daily.php
- To get adopted and receive stuff www.soldiersangels.org/heroes/submit_a_soldier.php
- Bibles, Christian videos, and books for family members www.emilitary.org/forums/index.php?s =c200230df4b511793b37d9fa7072b056&show-topic=354&pid=664&st=0&#entry664

Defense briefs

Predator fleet to expand

WASHINGTON – Air Force officials plan to expand the current Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle fleet to as many as 15 squadrons.

This increase, announced March 18, is in response to the escalating demand for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability in the war on terrorism. The plans are intended to ensure an increased number of Predators are available in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility as well as for new opportunities, officials said.

"Combating terrorism requires the Air Force provide worldwide vigilance and awareness through persistent command, control and surveillance capabilities, ensuring our nation's ability to see first, understand first and act first. Our effort in regard to UAVs is just one more capability that allows us to ensure air dominance for our joint team in any environment we operate," said Peter B. Teets, acting secretary of the Air Force.

In a Future Total Force initiative that will establish two Air National Guard Predator units in Texas and Arizona, Air Force officials are determining manpower and training requirements that will significantly enhance the Predator's ability to support combatant commander requirements. ANG Airmen will operate the UAVs from their respective states. Additionally, Air Force officials plan to place a Predator squadron with an ANG unit in New York.

One of the six Future Total Force initiatives involved establishing a distributive ground station in western New York to process global intelligence information. After assessing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements and reviewing concepts of operation, Air Force and Air National Guard leaders determined establishing a Predator unit in New York would provide a more immediate impact to the war on terrorism, officials said.

Besides the ANG Predator units, the Air Force currently has three operational, active-duty Predator squadrons located at Nellis Air Force Base and Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field in Nevada. Air Force Special Operations Command and Air Force Reserve Command Airmen also will operate Predators out of Indian Springs.

From the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing First Sergeant:

Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products is permitted only in designated tobaccouse areas.

Tobacco products include Cigars, cigarettes, pipes, spit and loose tobacco. Do not walk with a cigarette, pipe, or cigar in your hand or mouth.

Meet your neighbor



Staff Sgt. Joshua Riley

Home station: Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Unit: 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Hobbies: I enjoy going to the gym and swimming.

How do you contribute to the mission? I patrol off base and perform flightline security.

What is your favorite aspect of this deployment? The opportunity to work with and meet new people and experience a different culture.

Besides your family, what do you miss back home? I miss my house and my Jeep Wrangler.



Air Force Religious Schedule

Protestant

Sundays:

• Traditional -9 a.m. Hospital

11 a.m. • Contemporary Worship - Town Hall

5:30 p.m. • Inspirational Worship - H-6 Chapel

March 25:

6 p.m. • Good Friday - H-6 Chapel

March 27:

6 a.m. • Easter Sunrise Worship - call 443-7703 for location

11 a.m. • Easter Worship -Town Hall

5:30 p.m. • Easter Worship - H-6 Chapel

Roman Catholic

When Catholic Chaplain is available, Mass • 7:30 p.m. - H-6 Chapel

Confessions - Offered prior to Daily Mass

Saturdays:

7:30 p.m. • Mass - H-6 Chapel

Sundays:

9 a.m. • Mass – H-6 Chapel

2 p.m. • Mass - CJSOTF Chapel

3:30 p.m. • Mass - JSOAD-AP Chapel

March 24:

8 p.m. • Holy Thursday - H-6 Chapel

March 25:

3 p.m. • Good Friday Stations of the Cross - H-6 Chapel

8 p.m. • Celebration of the Lord's Passion - H-6 Chapel

March 26

8 p.m. • Holy Saturday Great Vigil Mass of Easter - H-6 Chapel

March 27:

9 a.m. • Easter Sunday Mass - Town Hall

Latter Day Saints

Sundays:

7 p.m. • Sacraments - H-6 Chapel

8 p.m. • Sunday School -H-6 Chapel Fellowship and Study

Daily:

8:30 p.m. • Band of

Brothers Fellowship - H-6 Chapel

9 p.m. • Band of Brothers Prayer - H-6 Chapel

Sundays:

2 p.m. • Protestant Bible Study - Hospital

7 p.m. • Catholic Study -Chapel Fellowship room

Tuesdays:

7:30 p.m. • Purpose Driven Life - Chapel Fellowship room

Wednesdays:

7 p.m. • Purpose Driven Life - Chapel Fellowship room

Thursdays:

5:30 p.m. • Purpose Driven Life - Hospital

7 p.m. • Latter Day Saints Study Group - Chapel Fellowship room

5 p.m. • Experiencing God-Chapel Fellowship room 7:30 p.m. • Women's Bible Study- Hospital

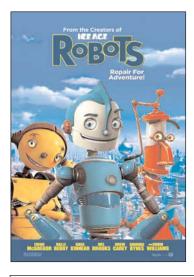
Know what this is?



Photo by Staff Sgt. Lindsey Maurice

If you can identify the object, send us an e-mail at redtailflyer@blab.centaf.af.mil. The first person with the correct answer wins a \$5 gift certificate courtesy of the 332nd Expeditionary Services Squadron. Last week's photo of a plastic light cover was first identified by Staff Sgt. Jason Dundon, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

ıstainer Movie Schedule



Schedule is subject to change

Today, March 25

3 p.m. - Robots

6 p.m. - Assault on Precinct 13

9 p.m. - Assault on Precinct 13

Saturday, March 26

3 p.m. - Coach Carter

6 p.m. - In Good Company

9 p.m. - Assault on Precinct 13

Sunday, March 27

3 p.m. - Racing Stripes

6 p.m. - Elektra

9 p.m. - In Good Company

Monday, March 28

3 p.m. - Ladder 49

6 p.m. - In Good Company

9 p.m. - Coach Carter

Tuesday, March 29

3 p.m. - Robots

6 p.m. - Racing Stripes

9 p.m. - White Noise

Wednesday, March 30

3 p.m. - Assault on Precinct 13

6 p.m. - Resident Evil 2

9 p.m. - In Good Company

Thursday, March 31

3 p.m. - Elektra

6 p.m. - Coach Carter

9 p.m. - Assault on Precinct 13



332nd Air Expeditionary Wing **Editorial Staff**

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All photos are Air Force photos, unless otherwise indicated.

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